



Rivas wins to push CU to 2nd

Buff junior earns second victory in three races

By Kyle Ringo
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ELDORA -- Gabriel Rivas is winning in the earliest stages of his skiing career at Colorado, and he's have fun doing it.

After discovering he had won the men's slalom Thursday on the second day of the 15th annual Colorado Invitational at Eldora Mountain Resort, Rivas celebrated by pointing his skis down the hill from the finish line to the lodge and giving his girlfriend, Maia, a ride on his back those several hundred yards.

Rivas has skied in three slalom competitions thus far in his first season with the Buffs and he has won two of them. His first victory came at the University of Alaska Invitational and the second was Thursday when he posted a two-run time of 1 minute, 43.04 seconds.

The junior from St. Jean De Maurienne, France, beat Leif Haugen from the University of Denver by nearly a half second. Haugen finished in 1:43.58. Ian Lochhead of DU finished third in 1:43.90.

Rivas said he was fortunate to have a good draw with the No. 2 starting position with soft snow conditions on a sunny day.

"It was pretty important for the first run because after 10 bibs it wasn't the same course as it was for me," he said. "The second run was not all about the snow. It was pretty much the same for everyone."

Rivas' second top-10 finish qualified him for the NCAA Championships in March.

He was joined in the top-15 by CU teammates Eric Davis (9th) and Stefan Hughes (11th).

Their performance combined with a third-place outing from Katie Hartman and sixth-place time for Lisa Perricone in the women's slalom propelled the Buffs into second-place in the team standings behind New Mexico.

The invitational continues today and Saturday in Aspen with the Nordic events, which are the strength of the CU team.

Rivas joined the Buffs at the beginning of the fall semester as a transfer from France, where he spent the past three years as a member of the French national team. He said he fought hard there but struggled to consistently finish well. His best result in those three years was a top-15 performance.

Rivas said he decided instead of continuing on the same road, he would complete his education and continue to work on improving on the slopes at CU.

"I kind of expected to do well, but skiing as solid as I do now is kind of surprising," Rivas said. "I'm pretty excited about that, and I think the main reason I've skied like that is the whole mood of the team. We have a really good mood, a good chemistry. That makes you a bit more relaxed on the top of the course."

Alaska-Anchorage 19-year-old freshman Alexandra Parker won the women's slalom with the fastest time of the day. She finished in 1:43.02, beating Clare Abbe of DU by nearly a full second. Abbe finished in 1:43.85.

Hartman finished third in the women's competition despite skiing with soreness in her midsection from a rib injury. She was well off Parker's pace finishing in 1:44.79.

"It was pretty painful, but once you get in the course you have so much adrenaline that it's not that bad," said Hartman, who is also now qualified for the NCAA championships.

Colorado Invitational

Team scores (after 4 events) -- 1. New Mexico 282; 2. Colorado 270.5; 3. Denver 267; 4. Alaska-Anchorage 245; 5. Utah 239.5; 6. Nevada 201; 7. Montana State 170; 8. Whitman 94; 9. Wyoming 0.

Men's slalom -- 1. Gabriel Rivas, CU, 1:43.04; 2. Leif Haugen, DU, 1:43.58; 3. Ian Lochhead, DU, 1:43.90; 4. Nikolai Finne, UNM, 1:44.47; 5. Petter Brenna, UNM, 1:44.79; 6. Hermann Lager, UU, 1:44.97; 7. Andreas Kilde, DU, 1:45.17; 8. Scott Veenis, UU, 1:45.60; 9. Eric Davis, CU, 1:45.64; 10. Halfdan Falkum-Hansen, UAA, 1:45.82;

11. Stefan Hughes, CU, 1:45.98; 12. Thomas Schwab, UNM, 1:46.37; 13. Torjus Krogdahl, UU, 1:46.43; 14. Seppi Stiegler, DU, 1:47.03; 15. Olivier Lacaille, UNM, 1:47.22; 16. Arman Serebrakian, CU, 1:47.55; 17. Toby Lamar, MSU, 1:49.43; 18. Dylan Bryant, UN, 1:49.70; 19. John Buchar, DU, 1:50.00; 20. Zach Fretz, UN, 1:50.60;

21. Jeff Crompton, UAA, 1:52.91; 22. Joey Nelson, MSU, 1:54.26; 23. Dan McKay, UAA, 1:56.45; 24. Taggart Spent, CU, 1:56.78; 25. Kristopher Champeny, MSU, 1:57.11; 26. Patrick Duran, CU, 1:57.40; 27. Thomas Zumbrunn, UU, 1:57.88; 28. Nathan Ord, WHT, 2:00.69; 29. Ryan Wolosyn, UAA, 2:04.73; 30. Eric Anderson, UN, 2:05.49;

31. Drew Roberts, CU, 2:07.47; 32. Tony Cesolini, CU, 2:09.55; 33. Egil Ismar, UAA, 2:14.44; 34. Tim Bak, WHT, 2:18.64; 35. Shane Collins, UN, 2:25.13.

Women's Slalom -- 1. Alexandra Parker, UAA, 1:43.02; 2. Claire Abbe, DU, 1:43.85; 3. Katie Hartman, CU, 1:44.79; 4. Karin Ohlin, UNM, 1:44.80; 5. Malin Hemmingsson, UNM, 1:45.36; 6. Lisa Perricone, CU, 1:45.75; 7. Taryn O'Flynn, UN, 1:45.89; 8. Lacy Saugstad, UAA, 1:46.11; 9. Mikaela Grassl, UU, 1:46.78; 10. Amy Harris, UN, 1:48.45;

11. Allison Empey, UAA, 1:48.48; 12. Amanda Goyne, UN, 1:48.53; 13. Megan Bacharach, MSU, 1:48.62; 14. Ashley Babcock, CU, 1:48.63; 15. Jenny Tank, DU, 1:48.91; 16. Kristina Palovicova, UN, 1:49.26; 17. Alison Leighton, MSU, 1:49.79; 18. Heidi Hillenbrand, CU, 1:49.87; 19. Hannah Victory, MSU, 1:55.34; 20. Erika Horst, UN, 1:57.61;

21. Chelsea Laswell, UU, 1:58.05; 22. Chirine Njeim, UU, 2:00.61; 23. Georgia Wettlaufer, DU, 2:02.06; 24. Molly Ryan, DU, 2:03.61; 25. Elizabeth Allen, WHT, 2:04.16; 26. Torey Anderson, WHT,

2:06.04; 27. Stefanie Demetz, UNM, 2:07.38; 28. Amy Lattimer, MSU, 2:10.17; 29. Lexie Drechsel, WHT, 2:10.67; 30. Holly O'Brien, UN, 2:53.25; 31. Jennifer Allen, CU, 3:00.42; 32. Joelle Chevalier, CU, 3:15.26. Did Not Start (CU): Carolina Nordh (2nd run).



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